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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 ANKARA 002555

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STATE FOR EUR/SE

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SUBJECT: TURKEY APPROVES USE OF INCIRLIK AIR BASE AS
MULTIDIRECTIONAL CARGO HUB

REF: 16 JUNE 2004 WALD/BASBUG LETTER

Classified by Ambassador Eric S. Edelman, reasons 1. 5 (b)
and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: Ten months after the US requested to establish a multi-directional cargo hub at Incirlik Air Base to support Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), the Government of Turkey (GOT) has agreed to the establishment of a cargo hub on terms slightly more restrictive than those requested. Despite the delay and the operational limitations, the approved hub should increase the efficiency of US cargo movement to Iraq and Afghanistan, reduce the strain on C-17s currently supporting those operations and free up some for other missions. Hub operations are expected to begin no earlier than June 1, 2005. Text of the Diplomatic Note containing agreed-upon parameters included in para. 8. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) Major General Sefer Ozturk, Turkish General Staff (TGS) J-5 Agreements Division Chief, on April 26-27, 2005 convened meetings with Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) Chief Major General Sutton, ODC Agreements and Operations Division representatives, the Assistant Air Attache and Deputy PolMilCouns to work out the modalities of a cargo hub at Incirlik AB to support US efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Joining him was MFA Deputy Director General (DDG) for Americas Affairs Suna Ilicak who announced that PM Erdogan approved the hub request on April 24 and the GOT was anxious to finalize the agreement as quickly as possible. According to Ilicak, the government had determined that the US request was actionable under the current UN resolutions covering Afghanistan and the TU Decree of Ministers covering US overflight and sustainment flights in support of OIF, which was first approved on June 22, 2003 for one year and renewed again in 2004. However, because the one-year OIF decree will expire in six weeks the GOT wanted to renew it for an additional year before announcing its decision. Once President Sezer signed the renewal decree, the GOT would announce the hub approval. (Note: Ilicak expected the decree to be signed on April 27 but ultimately Sezer did not sign it until April 29. The MFA provided written approval that evening but did not announce it until May 2, following the return of the PM and FM from travel. End Note.)

13. (C) Using European Command (EUCOM) Deputy Commander General Wald's June 16, 2004 letter of request as the basis for discussion, General Ozturk outlined the GOT-approved modalities, which were accepted with several minor changes: The GOT offer prohibited all weapons, including crew sidearms, but TGS agreed to allow crew members to transit with personal sidearms as long as appropriate security procedures are followed; the number of ground support personnel was increased from 130 to 150; it was agreed that flight schedules could be provided on a monthly basis and all changes to the flight schedule, with the exception of additional flights, could be notified by the 39th Air Wing at Incirlik Air Base to the TU 10th Tanker Base Command at Incirlik. Formal notification to the MFA and Turkish Air Force will only be required for any additional flights.

APPROVED PARAMETERS

14. (C) The final agreed-upon parameters, while falling short of the original request, allow establishment of a cargo hub that will help alleviate pressure on the military airlift aircraft currently servicing Afghanistan and Iraq. By allowing the on/off-loading of cargo to/from contract commercial craft, it will reduce wear and tear on military airlift aircraft and free up some for other missions. The six Incirlik-based C-17s will be able to provide the same airlift to Iraq as 9-10 aircraft based in Germany with fewer aircrews.

15. (C) Parameters:

- Incirlik AB will serve as a hub for cargo flights between the US and US military installations in Europe and Afghanistan and Iraq;
- Transit of non-lethal cargo only is permitted;
- Aircraft crew can carry sidearms and ammunition;

- Six military airlift aircraft (C-17) and up to 150 related temporary duty support personnel can be stationed at Incirlik AB to support intra-theater cargo movements;
- Contract commercial aircraft can transit the base;
- Monthly flight schedule must be provided in a reasonable time period in advance of the flights. Any flights beyond those included in the monthly schedule must be notified in advance via a Diplomatic Note and notice to the Turkish Air Force. The Incirlik AB hub operators must provide each day's flight schedule one day in advance;
- Streamlined process for customs and visa requirements, using the aircraft and/or passenger manifest as the passport control document;
- Cargo will be imported/exported using "manifest only" procedures;
- Flight crews RON;
- All cargo will be considered bonded and therefore exempt from taxes, duties and other fees and charges;
- All cargo aircraft will be considered military or state aircraft and therefore exempt from taxes, duties and other fees and charges.

INITIAL USG REQUEST

16. (C) The original US request was for a hub to service the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) and process general military cargo, including lethal cargo (i.e. weapons), but not ammunition, under a single blanket clearance. Following MFA indication in September '04 that it would be difficult to gain Cabinet approval for a hub to service the entire CENTCOM AOR, the US request was revised to limit the final destinations to Afghanistan and Iraq. While the GOT did not approve the transit of all general military cargo or a blanket flight clearance, we understand that the approved terms are acceptable to TRANSCOM and EUCOM. The GOT did agree to all other elements of the initial request.

17. (C) Outstanding details: The framework agreement has been approved but several details remain to be worked out in mil-mil channels, including the amount of flight information to be submitted in advance and how to address a requirement for advance notification of the nationality of contract carrier crew. We do not anticipate any difficulty in resolving these issues.

DIPLOMATIC NOTICE OF APPROVAL

18. (C) Following is the text of the Diplomatic Note dated April 28 which provides GOT approval of the cargo hub. The Embassy was not provided with the Note until April 29, following President Sezer's signature of the Cabinet decree extending the current overflight agreement for Operation Iraqi Freedom until June 22, 2006.

BEGIN TEXT OF DIPLOMATIC NOTE:

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America and with reference to the US request regarding the use of the 10th Tanker Base Command in Incirlik as a logistical cargo hub to support operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, has the honour to inform the following:

Taking into account the UNSC Resolutions NO: 1368 (2001), 1373 (2001), the North Atlantic Council Resolution No: SG (2001) 1147 dated October 4, 2001 concerning Afghanistan, the Decision of the Turkish Grand National Assembly No: 722 dated October 10, 2001, the Turkish Council of Ministers' Decree NO: 3240 (2001), and the UNSC Resolutions No: 1483 (2003), 1511 (2003) and 1546 (2004) concerning Iraq and the Turkish Council of Ministers' Decrees No: 5755 (2003) and 7515 (2004), the said request has been approved.

The rules and principles to be applied during the logistical cargo hub operation, as well as an appendix regarding flight information to be provided by the US side, are enclosed herewith. The Ministry kindly requests the Embassy to bring the enclosed document to the attention of the pertinent US authorities with a view to assuring their full compliance.

The modalities of the facilities accorded in line with the said request should be discussed and concluded with the Turkish General Staff.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the United States of America the assurances of its highest consideration.

Ankara, April

28, 2005

Encl: As stated.

Embassy of the United States of America
ANKARA

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END TEXT.

19. (C) Below is text of the noted attachment to the Diplomatic Note which outlines the approved modalities of the cargo hub. Paragraph 16 mentions Appendix 1, which is a grid containing the flight information to be submitted in advance on the monthly flight schedule, including: flight date, aircraft nationality, type of aircraft, aircraft registration, call sign, number of crew, name and four letter ICAO location codes of departure/destination airports, and the estimated times (UTC) of departure and arrival to and from these airports.

BEGIN TEXT OF RULES AND PRINCIPLES ATTACHMENT:

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THE RULES AND PRINCIPLES TO BE APPLIED DURING LOGISTICAL
CARGO HUB OPERATIONS

1. The UNSC Resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001) regarding Afghanistan, the Decision of the Turkish Grand National Assembly dated 10 October 2001 No: 722, the Decree of the Council of Ministers dated 21 November 2001 No: 3240, the UNSC Resolutions 1483 (2003), 1511 (2003) and 1546 (2004) regarding Iraq and the Decree of the Council of Ministers dated 22 June 2004 NO: 7515 constitute the legal basis for the US use of the 10th Tanker Base-Incirklik.

The inbound and outbound trans-shipment activities (hereinafter referred to as the hub operation) at 10th Tanker Base-Incirklik for general military cargo originating from and/or bound for the US and/or US military installations in Europe, solely be destined for Iraq and Afghanistan to support Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. The territory of Turkey and its airspace shall not be used by US assets involved in the hub operation for offensive actions against any country. The hub operation shall not include troop rotations.

2. The activities to be carried out during the hub operation shall be in conformity with the National Law of the Republic of Turkey, international law and courtesy rules as well as 10th Tanker Base-Incirklik regulations.

3. The US side is permitted to deploy 6 military airlift C-17 aircraft to 10th Tanker Base-Incirklik to conduct the inbound and outbound cargo movements of the hub operation. The activities to be carried out by the US for the purpose of the hub operation and their outcome shall create no financial burden for the Republic of Turkey. Any compensation arising directly or indirectly from activities carried out by the US personnel involved in the hub operation shall be fully borne by the US.

4. The number and the duties of the personnel expected to be temporarily prepositioned to support cargo movements in 10th Tanker Base-Incirklik shall be communicated to and approved by the Turkish General Staff.

5. The status of these prepositioned personnel, the number of which shall not exceed one hundred and fifty at any one time, will be subject to the same rules and principles applied to the US personnel currently deployed at the aforementioned base, unless otherwise specified herein.

6. The necessary documentation for the US personnel as well as the bill of lading concerning the cargo shall be submitted by the US to the 10th Tanker Base-Incirklik. During the aforementioned activities, no weapon (private weapon, chemical weapon, photo-reconnaissance equipment) or

ammunition shall be carried.

17. Technical arrangements regarding the activities related to hub operation that are not covered by this document shall be concluded between the US 39th Air Base Wing and the 10th Tanker Base Command-Incirlık under the coordination of the Turkish General Staff.

18. In the event of accommodation within the Base of the personnel (except for those who are temporarily deployed) involved in the hub operation due to technical breakdowns or for any other emergency situations that may arise, necessary arrangements will be concluded between the US 39th Air Base Wing and the 10th Tanker Base Command-Incirlık.

19. In case the need arises, the Turkish Government shall be allowed to use the US aircrafts and other US assets and capabilities to provide the existing Turkish military presence in Afghanistan with logistical support under conditions to be mutually agreed upon.

110. In case the need may arise, the Turkish side may suspend or permanently cease the utilization of the 10th Tanker Base-Incirlık by the US in the logistical hub operation, with 72 hours prior notification.

111. The flight crew shall not carry any side arms or weapons on their person and shall not take them into the Base. The aforementioned weapons will be kept in the aircraft in a secure manner if the flight crew will continue their mission with the same aircraft. If the flight crew will fly with different aircraft, the flight crew surrenders their personal arms to the U.S. armory with the attendance of the 10th Tanker Base Command Security Company personnel where they will be stored under lock until such time as the aircrew leaves the 10th Tanker Base Command-Incirlık on their next mission. At no time will the aircrew be carrying side arms on their person while on the Base except for transit to and from the armory with the attendance of the 10th Tanker Base Command Security Company personnel.

112. The force protection and security matters, including the VIP protection shall be in full responsibility of the Host country.

113. The inbound and outbound military support equipment to and from Turkey shall be subject to transit procedures. The necessary documentation (bill of lading) regarding the crew and the equipment shall be submitted to the relevant Turkish authorities by the US side. Military support equipment brought in transit to Turkey will be kept in temporary storage facilities designated for this purpose exclusively. The storage facilities within the 10th Tanker Base-Incirlık shall not be used for this purpose and the said equipment shall not be stored in these places.

114. Search and Rescue (SAR) missions within the SAR boundaries of Turkey shall be performed by Turkish authorities.

115. Refueling, electronic jamming shall not be carried out and chaff and flare shall not be used within Turkish Airspace.

116. Flight clearance requests for all flights related to the logistical hub operation shall be submitted in advance to the TGS monthly via the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in line with the current procedures in consistence with the attached Appendix 1. Any changes shall be notified to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to the Turkish Air Force.

117. During the flights within the Turkish Airspace, the flight corridors specified in the Turkish Air Information Publication shall be used, the air traffic commands given by the relevant air traffic control units and existing NOTAMs shall be complied with and all flights will be carried out as IFR.

118. An ICAO flight plan will be filed and the clearance number will be written in block 18th of the flight plan; during flights within the Turkish airspace while especially entering and exiting the Turkish airspace, wireless communication with the relevant air control unit shall be established and the "IFF"s will be kept "ON" at all times during the flight.

119. The implementation of the rules and principles established herein shall not infringe upon or violate the sovereign rights of the Republic of Turkey. Nor shall the said rules and principles be interpreted or applied in a way that runs counter to the national law of the Republic of Turkey.

120. None of the articles in this document shall affect or restrict the Republic of Turkey's right to take the necessary measures she deems necessary with a view to protecting her national interests and security.

¶21. Iraqi bound flights shall be limited to the duration of the "Decree of the Council of Ministers dated 22 June 2004 and No: 7515" (until 22 June 2005) or to the other Decrees that may be issued to extend the duration of the said Decree.

¶22. Unless otherwise agreed by the parties, no other bilateral or multilateral agreements to which Turkey and US are parties shall be applicable to this logistical hub operation.

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END TEXT.

¶10. (C) Comment: It took ten months of internal GOT debate to decide that the government already had the authority to allow the US to establish this cargo hub. MFA DDG Ilıcak explained the delay as a result of the FM's prerogative to take decisions to the PM even where an umbrella authority exists. Given the GOT's unwillingness to go against the negative tide of public opinion toward the US in recent months, the positive trend of events in Iraq may have provided the political opening the GOT was looking for and the prospect of a US congressional resolution recognizing an Armenian Genocide in Turkey, or the PM's planned June travel to the US may have dictated the timing. Whatever the rationale, US cargo operations to Afghanistan and Iraq will benefit, and the decision is welcome. End Comment.

¶11. (U) Kabul minimize considered.
EDELMAN